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Scholars Identify German Who Warned of Hitler's Atrocities

By Charles Fenyvesi
Washington Post Staff Writer

Two American University professors have identified the mysterious German industrialist who risked his life to warn a representative of Jewish organizations in Switzerland that Adolf Hitler planned to ship Jews to extermination camps in eastern Europe.

The two academic detectives discovered that the industrialist, Eduard Reinhold Schulte, also was a top World War II intelligence source for the Allies, warning them of Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union.

In a heretofore unnoticed citation in 1945, Allen Dulles, then chief of U.S. intelligence operations in Switzerland and later director of the CIA, stated that Schulte had "rendered most valuable services to the cause of the United Nations, motivated solely by his hatred of the Nazi system and his desire to see it overthrown as thoroughly and speedily as possible."

Schulte, who died during the 1950s, headed the largest zinc-producing firm in Germany. It had a branch in Switzerland. He passed along to the Allies, without pay, valuable information from inside the German military.

The professors who solved the four-decade-old mystery of Schulte's identity are Richard Breitman, 37, a specialist in European history, and Alan Kraut, 36, a specialist in U.S. immigration policy. They identified Schulte in the October issue of *Commentary*.

They said that they were left with "absolutely no doubt" about his identity when they found references in three groups of documents—Allied intelligence data, a Swiss banker's report to U.S. intelligence and Jewish reports out of Switzerland—to a German industrialist who cited as his source a German colonel with an armored regiment on the Russian front.

One of the U.S. intelligence reports identified Schulte by name. A Jewish document included the initials "E.S." And another Allied document disclosed that one of Schulte's sons fought in an armored regiment on the Russian front.

The only person still alive known to have received intelligence directly from the German industrialist is Gerhart Riegner, then, as now, the Geneva-based representative of the World Jewish Congress. Contacted by The Washington Post, Riegner would only repeat that he had given his word to the industrialist never to reveal his name.

But on previous occasions, Riegner had told others that their speculation was wrong. One of them, Walter Laqueur, director of research at Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies, said in an article Friday on the opinion page of The Washington Post that the industrialist's identity has now been established "beyond any shadow of doubt."

When Breitman and Kraut asked Riegner to let them know if they had the wrong man, Breitman said, "He did not contradict us."

Working independently of Breitman and Kraut, another scholar, Monty Penkower of Touro College in Brooklyn, also identified Schulte through research in Jewish archives in London and Jerusalem.

Breitman said that he and Kraut have been working on the case since 1980, "but we have been obsessively involved only since last fall. We just had to track him down."

Laqueur had come up with an important clue, the initial "S," which Riegner confirmed. Riegner then told Breitman and Kraut that the industrialist had 30,000 employees, was tall and opposed Hitler on moral grounds.

It appeared to Breitman and Kraut that Riegner was determined both to keep his secret and to keep talking about it.

"Riegner threw the gauntlet at

us," Breitman said. "He said scholars would never find out. That really was a slap at historians that we regarded as a challenge."

The two historians' speculation first centered on industrialist Hugo Stinnes, whose brother, Edmund, spent the war years in the United States. Their brother-in-law, Gero von Gaevernitz, a German-born American, was an adviser to Dulles.

But contacts with relatives and checks in archives showed that the brothers had no love for each other and that Hugo Stinnes "was no democrat, unless he concealed his true convictions very well," Kraut said.

The two scholars said that they found 20 German industrialists heading large corporations of roughly 30,000 employees during World War II and with family names beginning with "S."

"We were frustrated," Breitman said.

They then combed the original files of the U.S. legation and consulates in wartime Switzerland, which are now housed in Suitland in an annex of the National Archives.

"We found many citations of unnamed prominent German industrialists. And also at least five industrialists mentioned by name, three of them beginning with 'S,'" Breitman said. This search went nowhere.

Next they sifted through the Swiss-origin intelligence reports in the Archives. They said that the CIA has declassified only one-fourth of wartime records from agents and other sources.

"That's still better than the British," Breitman said. "That's indefinitely unavailable."

Breitman and Kraut said that they are convinced that the CIA has the letter naming the industrialist that Riegner said he gave to the U.S. consul in Switzerland in 1942 in what he called a "desperate attempt" to persuade the Allies that the information on the death camps came from reliable sources.

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